

Sports

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Summer League softball: A walk in the park for Union JV; Varsity washed out

By Todd Forrest
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The Union County Lady Panthers JV softball squad stole the show Tuesday afternoon when five games were originally slated with Union County's Junior Varsity Squad scheduled to see action vs Towns County, and later, the varsity would take on Gilmer County and White County.

The games were also the unofficial close of the Panther Pride Team Camp that began with a scavenger hunt on Sunday evening after reaching their destination in Ocoee, Tenn. Monday began with paintball action that was followed by a rafting trip on the Ocoee River.

"We do this to help team chemistry and to help them bond," Union County Head Softball Coach Jessica Stewart said.

When the team returned to Blairsville and took the field on Tuesday, paintball bruises dotted their arms from wrist to shoulder, but it didn't seem to faze them.

The JV Lady Panthers were set to host Towns County's varsity squad at 1 p.m., and for the first time all summer, it was at in front of the hometown crowd.

Unfortunately, a rain delay postponed the first pitch of the Towns-Union game by more than an hour, and when play resumed, Towns County appeared rusty from the get-go. The opportunistic Lady Panthers JV took advantage of more than a dozen free passes, via walk or hit-by-pitch, en route to a lopsided 21-3 victory.

Freshman pitcher Maddie Tanner tossed a five inning complete game for Union, since the mercy rule went into effect following the completion of the fifth inning.

Despite playing at home, the Lady Panthers JV were the visitors and struck for 3 runs in the top half of the first. Towns countered with two of its own in the bottom half of the inning.

In the second, Union could have done some serious damage after loading the bases with no-



body out, but only managed two runs for a 5-2 advantage midway through the inning.

The Lady Indians tacked on another run in the bottom of the second and trailed by only two at 5-3 entering the third inning.

Things began to unravel for Towns County in the third as they walked the bases loaded, setting the table for a 5-run inning.

The bottom of the third saw the Lady Indians strand a runner at third, and still leading 10-3 entering the fourth, Union was unable to build on their lead.

The score would remain the same until the top half of the fifth, when the Lady Panthers JV put the visitors away.

The Lady Indians would use three pitchers in the top half of the fifth as Union posted 11 runs - mostly due to walks and getting hit by pitches.

The Lady Panthers JV came through with timely base hits with ducks on the pond, but most of the base runners were the result of the rough day in the circle that was had by a young Towns County pitching staff.

Later in the afternoon, the Lady Panthers varsity were tied 2-2 with White County when the



rains came, calling it off in the third inning. The nightcap with Gilmer was a complete washout.

The Lady Panthers varsity will be back in action on Tuesday with a doubleheader at Jackson County.

Union will square off with Jackson County at 4 p.m. and Hart County at 5:30 p.m.

Official practice begins for Union County High School softball on Monday, July 27th. A fundraiser will be held on Saturday, Aug. 1st with the players bagging groceries at Bi-Lo and a team cookout at 6 p.m.

The season begins on August 7th in Gainesville at the Lanier Point Invitational softball

tournament. Union will play North Forsyth at 5:50 p.m. on Friday, and then play four games on Saturday vs Dawson County, Commerce, Pepperell, and Gainesville.

The Lady Panthers said goodbye to four key seniors from last year's squad but with plenty of talent across the board, it's a safe bet that Union will be in the mix for a Region 8-AA title and a berth at the State Elite 8 in Columbus. However, there will be a lot of new faces in new places, along with familiar faces in familiar places.

"Most of our outfielders have moved to the infield so we will have a whole new infield and outfield this year," Coach Stewart added.



Union County Lady Panthers JV squad in action during its 21-3 victory over Towns County's varsity. Union County did most of its damage by way of walks, getting hit by pitches, then advancing and scoring off of wild pitches and passed balls. The Union County varsity played two innings vs White County before thunderstorms canceled that game and the later game vs Gilmer County. The season gets under way on Aug. 7 at the Lanier Point Invitational in Gainesville. Photos/Todd Forrest



Trout stocking sites week of July 13-17, 2015

Fannin: Big Creek, Rock Creek, and Toccoa River
Lumpkin: Etowah River and Nimblewill Creek
Union: Cooper Creek and Toccoa River

Note: Information is subject to change. For the latest on stocking and event information, remember to "like" us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ChattahoocheeForestNationalFishHatchery. Please call the hatchery at 706-838-4723 for questions. The hatchery also provides trout for the state. Please contact Georgia DNR for information on sites stocked by the state.

UCHS hosts youth football camp; conditioning to begin Monday

By Todd Forrest
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Last week the Union County High School football coaching staff hosted a three-day youth football camp at Mike Colwell Memorial Stadium.

Both offensive and defensive drills were conducted by the Panthers coaching staff before the youngsters split up into two teams and closed with a fast-paced pass-oriented game. Each team had its own UCHS football coach which made the games just as competitive for the two coaches as it was for the young men that were on the field.

According to Union County Head Football Coach Brian Allison, the purpose of the Union County High School Football Camp is to provide each camper with the highest quality of instruction in an atmosphere where the emphasis is put on learning and developing skills.

"It is our goal at UCHS to ensure that each camper receives an enjoyable experience while participating in our football camp," he said.

As for the high school Panthers, the season is right around the corner with conditioning beginning next Monday, July 27th.

Following a week of getting into shape, official practice opens on Monday, Aug. 3rd.

Prior to conditioning, the Panthers are continuing their summer workouts this week and will attend a camp at Habersham Central on Wednesday and Thursday morning.

For those waiting to see the Panthers take the field, the wait is only 16 days from this Wednesday.

Union will host Holy Innocents from Region 6-AA on Friday, Aug. 7th at 6:30 p.m.

According to Coach Allison, that game could potentially hold a fundraiser or some type of special event on that date. Continue checking the *North Georgia News* over the next two weeks. As more information becomes available, it will be printed right here.

Two weeks later, the Panthers will host Sonorville at 7 p.m., in their second preseason scrimmage contest of the year. Last year, Union traveled to Gordon County to scrimmage Sonorville in a contest that was played by the varsity in the first half and junior varsity in the



Union County High School's Offensive and Defensive Line Coach Neil Setzer takes some snaps as the 'all-time' quarterback as he shows future lineman the difference between zone blocking schemes and man blocking schemes. Photos/Todd Forrest



Right: A future Panthers fires a pass during one of the games. Left: A future linebacker delivers a cleat during tackling drills. Photos/Todd Forrest

second half.

The season opens on Aug. 28th when Towns County visits Blairsville for a 7:30 p.m. kickoff.

The Indians are led by second year coach Billy Barnhart. They recently hired Lee Bohannon, former 10-year Gordon Lee High School assistant as the new defensive coordinator for the Blue and White.

The improved Indians are recently coming off a 7-on-7 scrimmage victory over Class AAAA's Forsyth Central that saw Towns score six touchdowns to three Bulldog touchdowns.

Union's Region 8-AA schedule opens at Social Circle on Sept. 25th. Homecoming will be held on Oct. 9th when Greene County comes to town, and Senior Night will take place on Oct. 30th vs Riverside Military Academy.

Region 8-AA returns two First Team All-State selections in Union's senior quarterback Joseph Mancuso and Rabun County's senior defensive back Charlie Woerner.

Another storyline heading into this fall is Washington Wilkes' new head coach Jacob Kelley. The 30-year old Kelley served as offensive coordinator for two years under former head coach Robbie Robinson, who is the new Athletic Director at MacIntosh County Academy.

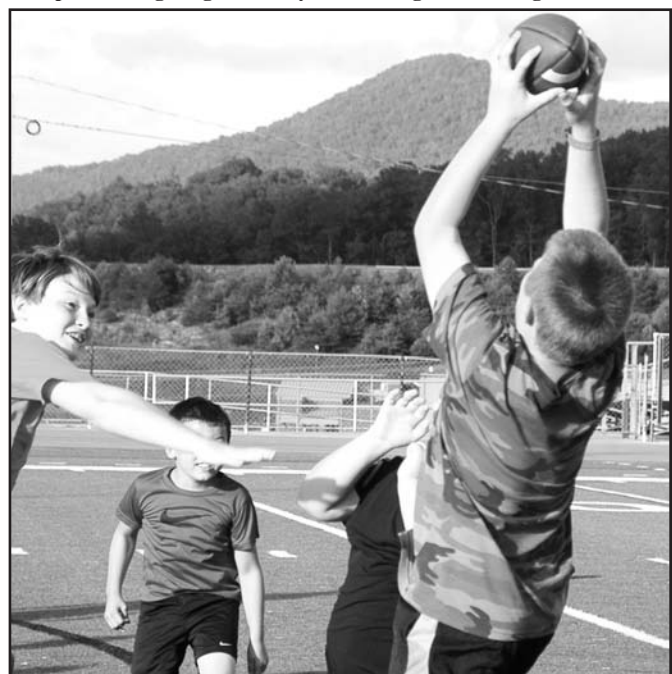
Elsewhere, Social Circle head coach Chad Estes and Oglethorpe County's Jimbo Hale are entering their second season with their respective programs following a less-than-stellar year one. Estes and Redskins put up a goose egg in the win column while Hale's Patriots managed just one victory.

2015 VARSITY FOOTBALL SCHEDULE			
August 7	H	Holy Innocents (Scrimmage)	6:30
August 14	H	Sonorville (Scrimmage)	7:00
August 28	H	Towns County	7:30
September 4	H	Lumpkin County	7:30
September 11	@	Andrews NC	7:30
September 18	@	Fannin County (Rec. Night)	7:30
September 25	@	Social Circle	7:30
October 2	H	Oglethorpe County (MS/Rec)	7:30
October 9	H	Greene County (Homecoming)	7:30
October 16	@	Rabun County	7:30
October 23		OPEN	
October 30	H	Riverside Military (Senior)	7:30
November 6	@	Washington-Wilkes	7:30

Junior Varsity Schedule			
September 3	H	Gilmer County	5:30
September 10		OPEN	
September 17	@	Lumpkin County	5:30
September 24	H	Pickens County	5:30
October 1	H	Dawson County	5:30
October 8	@	Fannin County	5:30
October 15	@	White County	5:30
October 29	H	Rabun County	5:30



Camper were giving it all they had during the tackling drills.



The next Jacob Rogers? A future Panther receiver climbs the ladder to haul in a pass during camp on Thursday. Photos/Todd Forrest

Attention ladies... it's Sadie Hawkins Tournament Day

Now is the time to "Pick a Partner" and sign up to play in our Annual Sadie Hawkins Golf Tournament at Butternut Creek Golf Course.

Format is Select Shot between you and your partner. Cost is \$45 per person. Prizes will be given for Flight Winners and Closest to the Pin.

Registration along with a delicious breakfast, prepared by our ladies, will begin at 7:30 AM. Tee Time will begin at 8:30 AM. Lunch will be provided after play.

Let's make this picture come true and 'pick a partner'. This is a great fun day at golf! Make checks payable to BCLGA Sadie Hawkins Golf Tournament and send check & Handicap to Betty Taylor, P.O. Box 296, Blairsville, GA 30514 or call Betty Taylor at 706-745-2248 - cell phone 706-781-9910 by July 27, 2015. You can sign up in the Pro Shop also - 706-439-6076. N0July22,25/CA

